

Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources  
Apiary Program Update  
Spring 2021



# STATE OF THE STATE:

SPRING UPDATE ON HONEY BEE HEALTH IN THE COMMONWEALTH

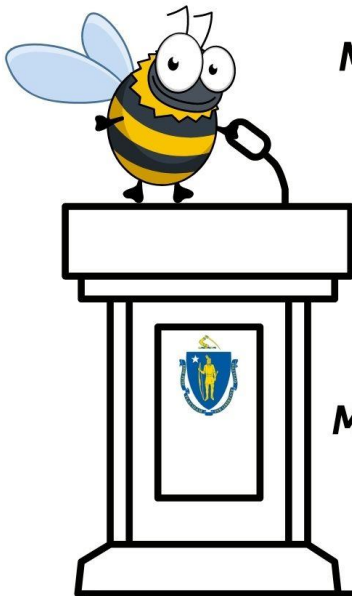
**Mondays, March 8th, 15th & 22nd 2021**



**7:00pm-9:00pm EST**



Join the MDAR and UMass Teams to hear the following updates:



**March 8th:** Honey Bee Laws and Regulations - Kim Skyrn  
How to Inspect Your Hive - Ken Warchol

**March 15th:** Honey Bee Viruses - Paul Tessier  
Pesticides and Bees - Hotze Wijnja

**March 22nd:** USDA Honey Bee Survey - Hannah Whitehead  
MDAR BEE Aware Honey Bee Survey - Kim Skyrn

**Zoom Meeting ID: 970 5731 8820; Password: 419460**  
[https://zoom.us/j/97057318820?](https://zoom.us/j/97057318820?pwd=eEljYW13c0hFL3ZSR2dob0RLV2hCUT09)  
[pwd=eEljYW13c0hFL3ZSR2dob0RLV2hCUT09](https://zoom.us/j/97057318820?pwd=eEljYW13c0hFL3ZSR2dob0RLV2hCUT09)  
**One tap mobile: +16465588656,,97057318820#,,,419460#**

*This event may not be recorded so Bee There or Bee Square!*

**Zoom Link:** <https://zoom.us/j/97057318820?pwd=eEljYW13c0hFL3ZSR2dob0RLV2hCUT09>

**Meeting ID:** 970 5731 8820

**Passcode:** 419460

**One Tap Mobile:** +16465588656,,97057318820#,,,419460# US (New York)

# NEW ENGLAND HONEY BEE UPDATE

*Join the New England states Apiary Inspectors to "Lunch & Learn" by getting the latest updates on honey bee health and seasonal management recommendations for ensuring healthy colonies.*

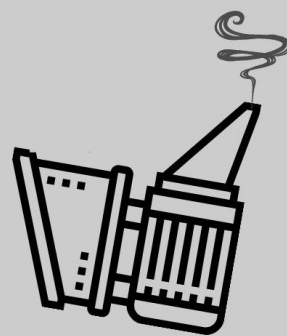
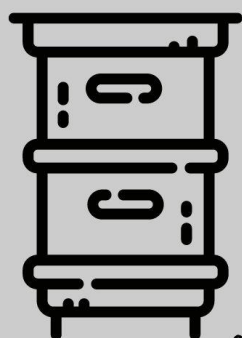
*Bee sure to come prepared with questions to ask the inspectors!*

**Friday April 2, 2021**

**Friday June 4, 2021**

**Friday August 6, 2021**

**Friday October 1, 2021**



**12:00pm – 2:00pm EST**



*These events may not be recorded so Bee There or Bee Square!*

**Zoom Meeting ID: 952 9946 3401; Password: 404079**

[https://zoom.us/j/95299463401?  
pwd=ZGF2bW1lOHVHR3RxQ2FHWmF5RUw3UT09](https://zoom.us/j/95299463401?pwd=ZGF2bW1lOHVHR3RxQ2FHWmF5RUw3UT09)

**One tap mobile: +16465588656,,95299463401#,,,,\*404079#**

**Contact Info:** [bees@mass.gov](mailto:bees@mass.gov)



*Apiary Inspectors of America*



**Zoom Link:** <https://zoom.us/j/95299463401?pwd=ZGF2bW1lOHVHR3RxQ2FHWmF5RUw3UT09>

**Meeting ID:** 952 9946 3401

**Passcode:** 404079

**One Tap Mobile:** +16465588656,,95299463401#,,,,\*404079# US (New York)



# 2021 Honey Bee Education Days at the State Apiaries

*Join the MDAR Apiary Program Inspection Team as they dive into live honey bee hives located at the State Apiaries in Danvers and Amherst, MA. These virtual presentations will provide a "bees eye view" along with demonstrations and recommendations for beekeepers to ensure healthy colonies.*

*All events are free and open to the public.*

**Zoom Meeting ID:** 984 0523 1501

**Password:** 436140

<https://zoom.us/j/98405231501?pwd=TKo4cXM5czhScHVUYmJGMHFPVGUxQT09>

**One tap mobile:**

+13126266799,,98405231501#,,,,\*436140#

**Saturdays  
10am-12pm**

**April 10th**

*Winter Evaluation &  
Spring Prep*

**May 8th**

*Spring Management*

**June 12th**

*Summer Management*

**July 10th**

*Pests, Parasites &  
Pathogens*

**August 14th**

*Fall Management I*

**August 28th**

*Honey Extraction*

**September 11th**

*Fall Management II*

**October 9th**

*Winter Prep*

**Zoom Link:** <https://zoom.us/j/98405231501?pwd=TKo4cXM5czhScHVUYmJGMHFPVGUxQT09>

**Meeting ID:** 984 0523 1501

**Passcode:** 436140

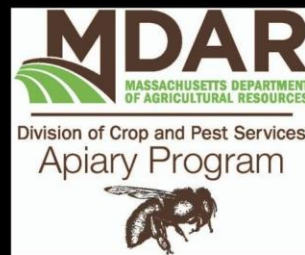
**One Tap Mobile:** +13126266799,,98405231501#,,,,\*436140# US (Chicago)

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# GOT HONEY BEES?

Complete the MA Bee Aware  
Honey Bee Health Survey by  
May 31st, 2021 and get a  
**FREE** sticker!

Survey Link:  
[bit.ly/3cMiEse](https://bit.ly/3cMiEse)



[bit.ly/3cMiEse](https://bit.ly/3cMiEse)



## BEE AWARE: The 2020-2021 Massachusetts Honey Bee Health Survey

Thank you for participating in the BEE AWARE Health Survey by providing feedback on the health of your honey bee colonies!

This survey has been created by the Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR) to serve as a tool for Massachusetts honey beekeepers to share data on colony health for the past to current bee season: May 2020 - May 2021.

Participation in this survey is voluntary. After the completion, interested respondents will get a FREE - "Support Local Beekeepers" weather-proof sticker.

A summary of survey results will be provided to the beekeeping community and presented at the Massachusetts State Beekeepers Association Annual Meetings.

Happy Beekeeping,  
-The MDAR Apiary Program Bee Team

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## Voluntarily Register Your Apiary Now!

A total of 632 beekeepers have voluntarily registered their apiaries with MDAR since April, 2017 by using the new online form: <https://www.mass.gov/forms/apiary-and-colony-registration-form>. Please consider taking a quick second to register your apiary today so that we can best communicate with beekeepers and investigate honey bee health issues in your area.

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## Do You Have a Dead-Out or Hive Death?



The Apiary Program Team will continue to offer health inspections of non-live hives through the winter months. To minimize the risk of COVID-19, these inspections will only take place under these conditions:

- *Inspections are preferred as those without beekeepers present in the apiary.*
- *If present during the inspection, beekeepers must wear masks and practice social distancing of at least 6ft during the inspection. Inspections will not be performed if beekeepers are not wearing masks or practicing social distancing!*
- *Beekeepers must confirm that they are currently asymptomatic or have not tested positive for COVID-19 within 14 days prior to the inspection date.*
- *Inspections will only occur outdoors. Inspectors cannot enter dwellings to gain access to an apiary or perform inspections.*
- *Inspections will not occur in gatherings of 10 or more people.*

To schedule an inspection for these hives, please submit the electronic form:

<https://www.mass.gov/forms/mdar-apiary-inspection-request-form>. Inspections of live honey bee hives will resume Spring 2021.

We also encourage you to request live honey bee hive inspections NOW so that we can best plan for the seasonal needs of beekeepers across the state.

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## Submit Samples of Your Honey Bees to the Lab!

Request FREE kits from MDAR and submit samples from your own hives. These FREE kits are easy to use by following the provided instructions and materials. Samples are analyzed and results provided directly to the beekeeper from the [USDA-ARS Bee Research Laboratory in Beltsville, MD](https://www.ars.usda.gov/northeast-area/beltsville-md-barc/beltsville-agricultural-research-center/bee-research-laboratory/docs/bee-disease-diagnosis-service/) within a few weeks after receipt. There is no fee to process samples so you only need to pay for postage to mail each kit. These kits are great to use on hives that die during winter and aid in troubleshooting health issues.

Note that each kit contains materials to sample 1 hive so request multiple kits if your apiary contains multiple hives. To request simply send your **name**, **mailing address** and **quantity requested** via email to [bees@mass.gov](mailto:bees@mass.gov) with the subject line "**Bee Kits**".

To find out more about the lab and sample prep/processing visit their website:

<https://www.ars.usda.gov/northeast-area/beltsville-md-barc/beltsville-agricultural-research-center/bee-research-laboratory/docs/bee-disease-diagnosis-service/>.



## Registered Pesticides for Honey Bee Hives

The following is a list of the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR) registered pesticide products labeled for use in honey bee hives for management of pests and parasites. These product registrations are currently active and will expire on 6/30/2021. Stay up to date on current product registrations and label changes by visiting the *Massachusetts Pesticide Product Registration Information* website: <http://www.kellysolutions.com/MA/pesticideindex.htm>.

These general use products can be applied to individual beekeeper owned hives. If applying to hives other than those owned by the beekeeper, then a pesticide license is required. Visit the following pesticide regulations to learn about the pesticide applicator license: <https://www.mass.gov/files/documents/2017/10/30/333cmr10.pdf>.

Product Name	Active Ingredient	EPA Registration Number	Target Pest
Api-Bioxal	oxalic acid dehydrate	91266-1-73291	Varroa mite
Apiguard	thymol	79671-1	Varroa mite
Api Life Var	menthol, eucalyptus oil, thymol	73291-1	Varroa mite
Apistan	fluvalinate	2724-406 & 2724-406-79671	Varroa mite
Apivar	amitraz	87243-1	Varroa mite
CheckMite Plus	coumaphos	11556-138 & 11556-138-61671	Varroa mite, Small hive beetle
Formic Pro	formic acid	75710-3	Varroa mite
HopGuard II	potassium salts of hop beta acids	83623-2	Varroa mite
HopGuard III	potassium salts of hop beta acids	82623-2	Varroa mite
Mite Away Quick Strips	formic acid	75710-2	Varroa mite

B402 Certan

*Bacillus thuringiensis*  
*aizawai*

94413-1

Greater wax moth

# Varroa Mite Management

PESTS EXCEED THRESHOLDS (>3 MITES/SAMPLE!)

## What's Your Varroa Mite Count? Find Out With a FREE Alcohol Wash Jar!

MDAR, Mite Management and Detection Assessment Report, USDA, Northeastern IPM Center

**SPRING AND SUMMER**

**Re-Queen**  
Select mite resistant stock when available

**Brood Interruption**  
Split hive or allow to swarm (capture swarm!)

**Drone Brood Trapping/Removal**  
Insert foundation-less or drone frame

**Screened Bottom Board**  
Check mite drop for effectiveness

**CHEMICAL TYPES:**

**Synthetic**  
PROS: Targeted toxicity  
CONS: Last longer in the environment

**Organic**  
PROS: More natural  
CONS: More toxic to bees (more harmonious to beekeeper!)

**PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE):**

**Integrated Pest Management (IPM) for Varroa mites**

IPM is a decades-old farm strategy for managing pests while minimizing chemical use. Experts now recommend IPM for Varroa. Rather than relying on a "silver bullet", good IPM incorporates multiple strategies throughout the season, based on pest levels and pest biology.

**IPM PRINCIPLES:**

- KNOW YOUR PEST
- PREVENT pest build-up using non-chemical practices
- SAMPLE REGULARLY to track pest population levels
- INTERVENE with pesticides when populations reach damaging thresholds (they produce treatment and resistance)

**Chemical Management Table:**

Name	Active Ingredient [mode of action]	Season [temp]	Honey super safe?	Notes
<b>Synthetic</b>				
ApiVar®	amitraz [contact]	Pop. Increase (Not Temp Dependent)	NO	
<b>Organic: essential oil</b>				
ApiGuard®	thymol [fumigant]	Pop. Increase (60-105° F)	NO	
Api Life Var®	thymol, menthol, eucalyptus oil [fumigant]	Pop. Increase (64-95° F)	NO	
<b>Organic: organic acid</b>				
MAQS®, Formic Pro®	formic acid [fumigant]	***Kills mites in brood Pop. Increase (50-65° F)	YES	MAQS: 1-3 weeks Formic Pro: 2-3 weeks
Oxalic Acid, Api-Bioxal®	oxalic acid dihydrate [contact, fumigant]	Pop. Increase (Not Temp Dependent) Dormant	NO	Immediate (but may need to repeat) wait 2 weeks to add honey supers
HopGuard II/III®		Pop. Peak	YES	1 month

**Check It Out!**

<https://www.northeastipm.org/ipm-in-action/publications/varroa-mite-ipm-brochure/>